DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 327 972 EA 022 646

AUTHOR Packard, Richard D.
TITLE Building In Accountability Mechanisms for Democracies & Bureaucracies: From Governmental & Educational Special Interest Operations to High-Quality Performance Systems. An Added Perspective to "What Price Democracy? Politics, Markets and America's Schools" by Dr. Terry Moe and Dr. John Chubb.
PUB DATE Oct 90
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented to the Arizona Republic Education Forum (Phoenix, AZ, October 23, 1990).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Accountability; Elementary Secondary Education; Formative Evaluation; Organizational Development; *Policy Formation; Program Development; *Program Effectiveness; Program Improvement

ABSTRACT

To assure accountability to educational policy developed by elected and appointed leaders, agencies and organizations must adopt high quality evaluation designs tailored to meet three basic tenets: (1) different processes for policy formation and demonstration of accountability; (2) clear accountability expectations built into policies; (3) responsibility for accountability focused at level of application. There is a need to swing from a political to a knowledge base in decisions to carry out policy directives. School operations are often based on tenacity, authority, or intuition instead of information. Accomplishments must be based on astuteness rather than opinion backed by power. Success in demonstrating accountability requires reliable and valid knowledge and technology. Two figures are included. (EJS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED327972

BUILDING IN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS FOR DEMOCRACIES & BUREAUCRACIES

From Governmental & Educational Special Interest Operations To High-Quality Performance Systems

–

AN ADDED PERSPECTIVE

to

What Price Democracy?

Politics, Markets and America's Schools

by

Dr. Terry Moe & Dr. John Chubb

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Richard D. Packard

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

–

Submitted by
Dr. Richard D. Packard, Professor
& Accountability Research Consultant
P. O. Box 5774
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona 86011

Presented to:
The Arizona Republic Education Forum
October 23, Phoenix, AZ

EA022646

BUILDING IN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS FOR DEMOCRACIES & BUREAUCRACIES

Democracy, Politics & Accountability

Democracies most often use a political procedure of compromise & majority vote to develop policies & directives to carry out agreed-upon societal goals. Individuals & organizations who accept the responsibility to develop & implement programs to meet these goals also have a tendency of applying these political democratic procedures of policy development. In order to assure accountability to public & private policy developed by elected and appointed leaders, agencies and organizations must adopt *high-quality evaluation research designs* which are tailored to meet basic tenets as follows:

1. **Policy formulation & demonstration of accountability require different processes**. Policy formulation and demonstration of accountability in meeting these public objectives require vastly different processes & procedures. In a democracy policy should be developed "democratically." On the other hand, ensuring the public trust requires a level of knowledge and technology which adequately assesses progress toward meeting policy goals.

2. **Policy Leaders must assure that accountability is clearly established in meeting responsibilities for goal attainment**. When government (or governing boards) develop policy, important additional requirements to build into *all* laws or directives are clear accountability expectations. Organizations & individuals responsible for implementation of public policy will adhere to whatever level of accountability is officially established. Without sound policy including high-quality expectations for accountability, school organizations, for example, will *only* report what they are doing and *not* how well they are meeting societal objectives.

3. **Responsibility for accountability must be focused at the levels of local policy application**. After establishment of legislation and policies, governing bodies need to practice a "hands-off" stature. Full responsibility for demonstrating accountability must rest with members of the local organization. They need to adopt "quality-level mechanisms" which will demonstrate how well they are meeting program directives and objectives. Once policy bodies have set the stage, organizations can then apply their own creative and dynamic capabilities without political intervention. They can move away from program development & evaluation which is based solely on political policy formulation. Instead, they can introduce procedures which assure the use of the latest and most appropriate knowledge & technology to account for levels of success in *all* school responsibilities; i. e., teacher & administrator evaluation linked to measurement of student progress.

The Needed Swing From A Political To A Knowledge Base For Accountability In Education

Moving from present levels of operational thinking in government & education. Decisions to carry out policy directives in government & education are often made based on less-than-sufficient levels of knowledge and information. Critical school operations include: formulation & application of legislative mandates; board policy development; administrative decision making & communication; interpersonal relationships & input of professional personnel; validation of curricular content; and teacher, administrator & student assessment procedures which are validated & aligned with evaluation systems. Such school operations are often based on the following levels of thinking:

1. Tenacity. The most vocal and tenacious special interests are supported and their desires become practice.
2. Authority. The strongest political & administrative mandates & directives establish the operational level of organizations. (This often translates to autocratic control & limited vision.)
3. Intuition. Opinions or feelings which may or may not be lacking in vision or sufficient knowledge base evade demonstration of accountability.

Toward A Breakthrough In Operational Accountability Based On Knowledge & Technology

A required change in levels of thinking. We know that our past procedures of using the "most powerful and vocal interests" for program development clearly have not achieved a sufficient level of accountability for educational goals. Therefore, the next step is to change our thinking about how things can best improve. That is why our society is continuing to strive for a clearer application of necessary accountability procedures. Even with the extensive input of personal and financial resources, the "old political approach" continues to produce no meaningful reform.

For accountability to societal goals, there needs to be an evolution from the use of the "most vocal interests, political influence or majority vote procedures" to one which accomplishes progress based on astuteness rather than opinion backed by power. Decisions based on knowledge and technology about the total system are required. The difference from past procedures is that progress in improving operational levels of agencies is accomplished through assessment and improvement of the total organization and its key interrelated components and not through *tenacity, authority* & *intuition.*

HOW TO GET THERE?: The Application Of The Accountability Mechanism

Reliable & valid knowledge & technology. Success in demonstrating accountability requires reliable and valid technological mechanisms. The following models represent the types of procedures and technology required:

1. **Knowledge** about the organization and its key components is gained through a "process assessment model" for meeting long-range accountability. Page four depicts such a model. It identifies what organizational factors are involved, suggests procedures to assess the factors, and follows with recommended improvement plans which may be applied to each factor.

2. **Technology** is required to *demonstrate accountability*. Accountability is not simply implementation and maintenance of special interests and opinions, but "accepting responsibility of one's actions" (*The Arizona Republic*, October 3, 1990). It also involves systematically mapping the rate of success or failure over a long-range period of time. This process requires planning and application of multi-technological research designs and methods. The "readiness assessment model" on page five identifies several of the key support and focus components of school organizations. Technology is available to evaluate, track and improve progress of each organizational component within the total system.

Conclusion

In a democracy, majority rule and political compromise are important for governments and governing boards to set policy and direct societal goals. On the other hand, *accountability* for objectives, such as improved student achievement and how it is impacted by the "health" and level of operation of any organization, takes much more than mandates and agreements. It requires objective knowledge about "what is," as well as application of technology which assesses how well organizational and individual responsibilities are being carried out over the long haul. A change in approach and thinking is required to move from functioning on a level of special interest influence to making decisions based on knowledge and technology. Governmental and educational accountability requires a valid mechanism which clearly and systematically breaks through past bureaucratic standards and traditions of operation. Education doesn't need new structures; it simply requires accountable ones.

Figure 1.

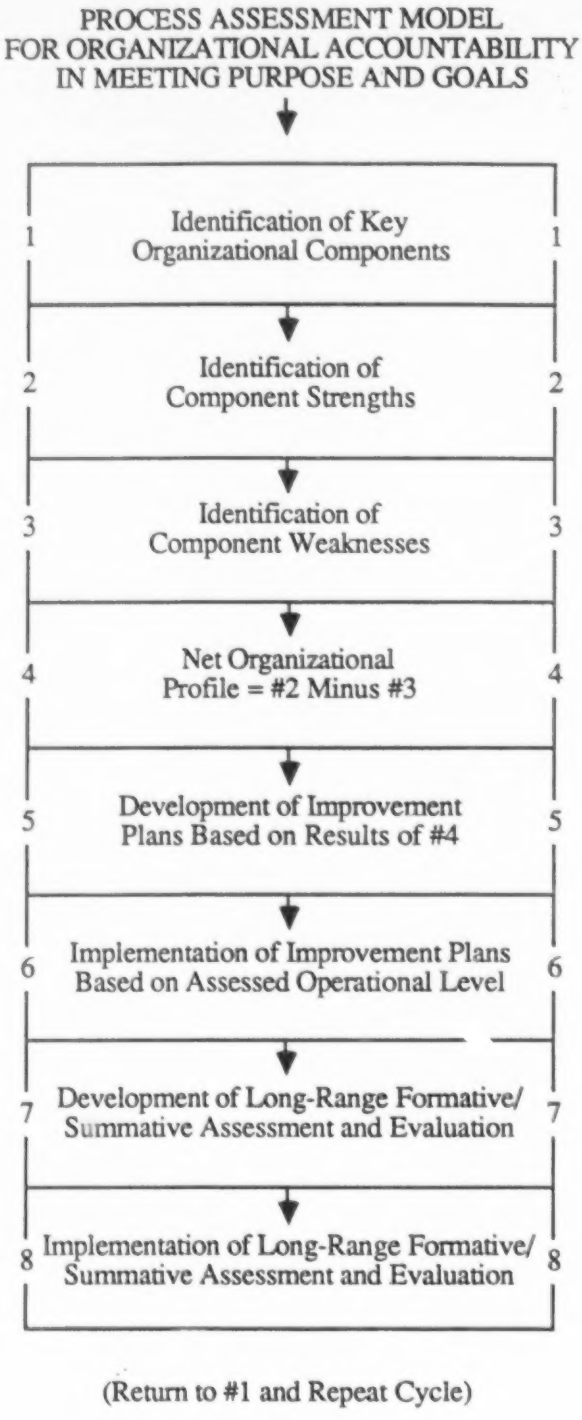
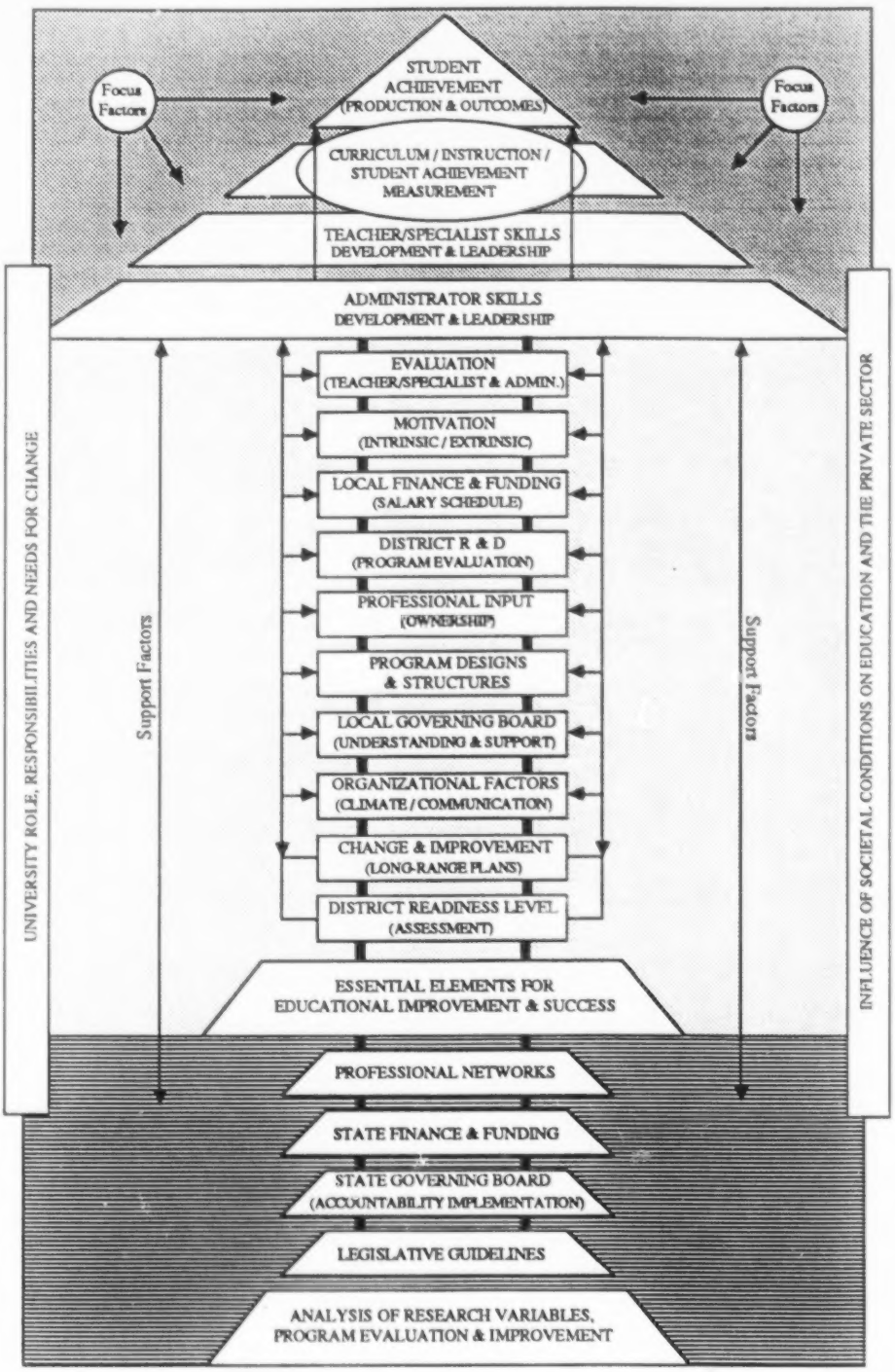

PROCESS ASSESSMENT MODEL
FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY
IN MEETING PURPOSE AND GOALS
1 Identification of Key Organizational Components 1
2 Identification of Component Strengths 2
3 Identification of Component Weaknesses 3
4 Net Organizational Profile = #2 Minus #3 4
5 Development of Improvement Plans Based on Results of #4 5
6 Implementation of Improvement Plans Based on Assessed Operational Level 6
7 Development of Long-Range Formative/ Summative Assessment and Evaluation 7
8 Implementation of Long-Range Formative/ Summative Assessment and Evaluation 8
(Return to #1 and Repeat Cycle)

Figure 2.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS
ASSESSMENT MODEL


Focus Factors
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (PRODUCTION & OUTCOMES)
Focus Factors
CURRICULUM / INSTRUCTION / STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MEASUREMENT
TEACHER/SPECIALIST SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP
ADMINISTRATOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP
UNIVERSITY ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND NEEDS FOR CHANGE
Support Factors
EVALUATION (TEACHER/SPECIALIST & ADMIN.)
MOTIVATION (INTRINSIC / EXTRINSIC)
LOCAL FINANCE & FUNDING (SALARY SCHEDULE)
DISTRICT R & D (PROGRAM EVALUATION)
PROFESSIONAL INPUT (OWNERSHIP)
PROGRAM DESIGNS & STRUCTURES
LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORT)
ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS (CLIMATE / COMMUNICATION)
CHANGE & IMPROVEMENT (LONG-RANGE PLANS)
DISTRICT READINESS LEVEL (ASSESSMENT)
Support Factors
INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL CONDITIONS ON EDUCATION AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT & SUCCESS
PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS
STATE FINANCE & FUNDING
STATE GOVERNING BOARD (ACCOUNTABILITY IMPLEMENTATION)
LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES
ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH VARIABLES, PROGRAM EVALUATION & IMPROVEMENT

A Model of Interrelated Components of Program Support and Focus Factors for Effecting Change and Reform in Education